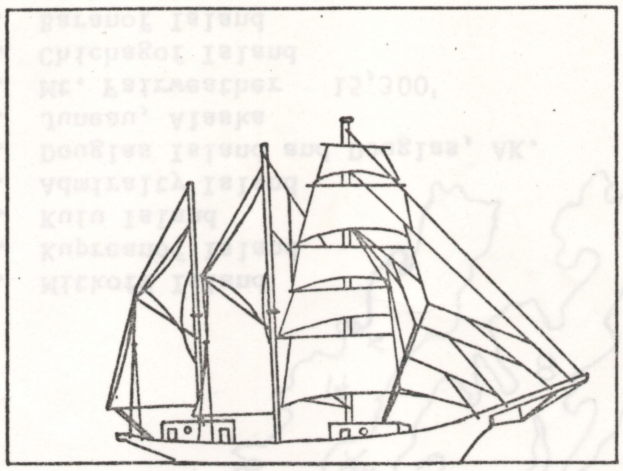

SEARCHLIGHT

Ship to Shore News from RV REGINA MARIS

Volume #4, Number 19 16 July 1979 Ketchikan, Alaska

"The Prairies" finally yielded 4 humpbacks after REGINA had thoroughly covered and searched the area without sighting a single humpback. As predicted, they apparently were feeding in the vicinity of a single fishing boat, which we discovered on Radar and approached. We found the 4 humpbacks feeding and milling about at leisure. We followed them for several hours with difficulty as they kept changing the direction of travel making it difficult to predict where they would surface and blow next. We also spent an hour or so listening with hydrophones strung out to windward without any success, even though the whales were surfacing 1500-2000 metres away. By late afternoon, the wind started to come up and soon REGINA put up her sails and was on her way Northwest to Alaska at 7 knots with a fair wind astern. We crossed the Canadian/US border on 14 July with a loud cheer from all hands on board. Six hours later found us tied up to the city wharf in Ketchikan, Alaska with fresh water showers, civilization and a host of spectators to greet us. As soon as we fill up with fresh water and vegetables and the crew unwinds, we will depart Ketchikan and spend the remaining 2 weeks conducting a survey of orcas and humpbacks as we work our way north up through the myriad Passages and Sounds which are common in this area. The prospects of running into orcas and humpacks look very promising, as many of the spectators along the pier are local salmon gillnetters and have seen large pods of orca and dozens of humpbacks while fishing north of Ketchikan. The weather has been absolutely beautiful, with temperatures around 60° during the day and dropping to a cool 45-50° at night. The topography consists of snow-covered mountains, 3000-4000 ft. high. The 200 ft. tall spruce trees reaching for the sun create a blanket of green and white. Eagles soar by, plucking herring out of the Sound, while salmon can be seen splashing as they work their way up against the tides for the mouths of the various large salmon spawning rivers that empty into the waters of Southeast Alaska. All in all, the rough days at sea have been forgotten and replaced by placid inland waters, rich in wildlife and peaceful scenery - an artist's dream.

Sincerely,

Henk Van Beever
Relief Master
r/v REGINA MARIS

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617-523-3455

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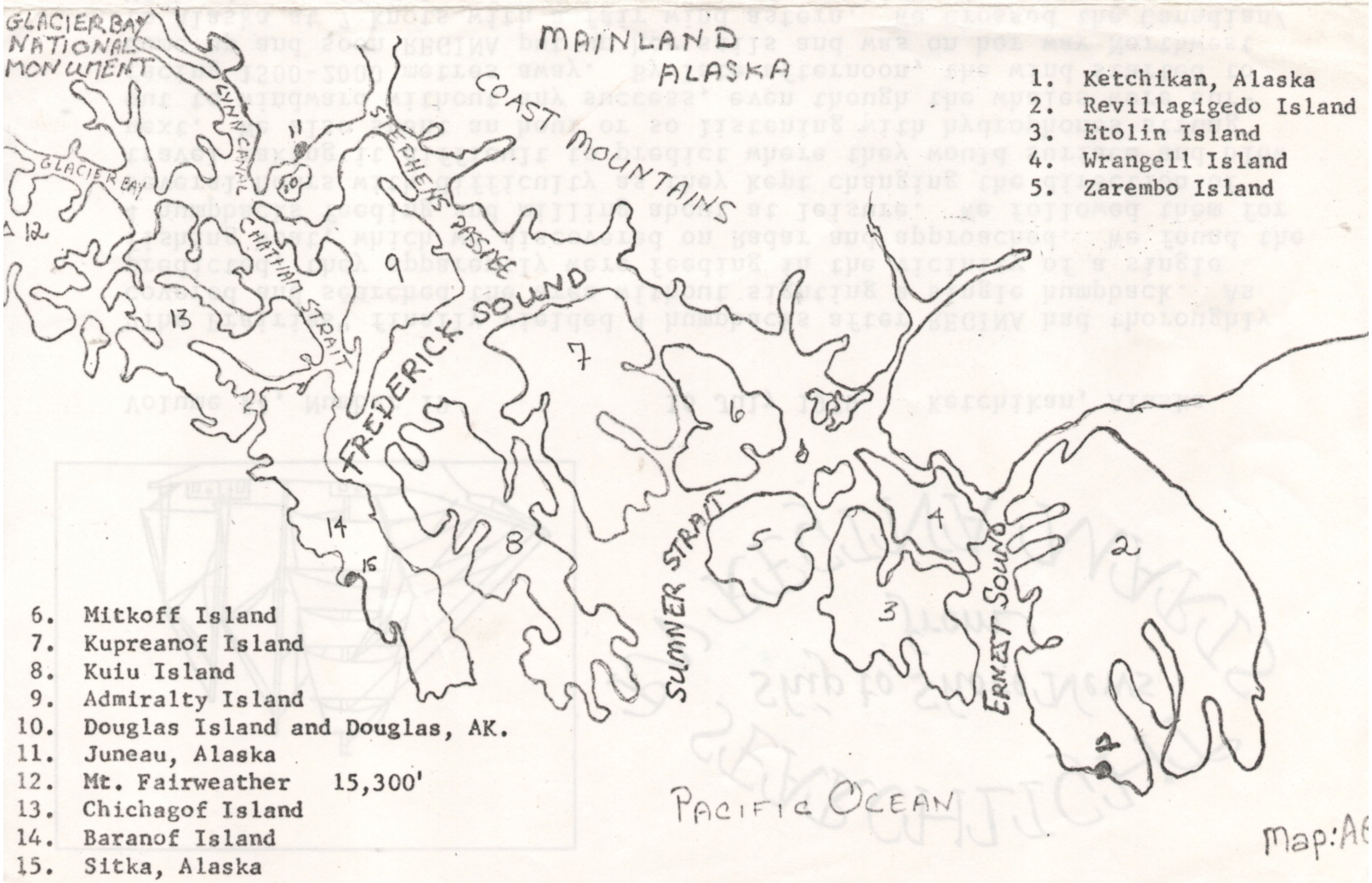
Stephen Nelson
Spokane, WA



Map: AE

Stephen Nelson
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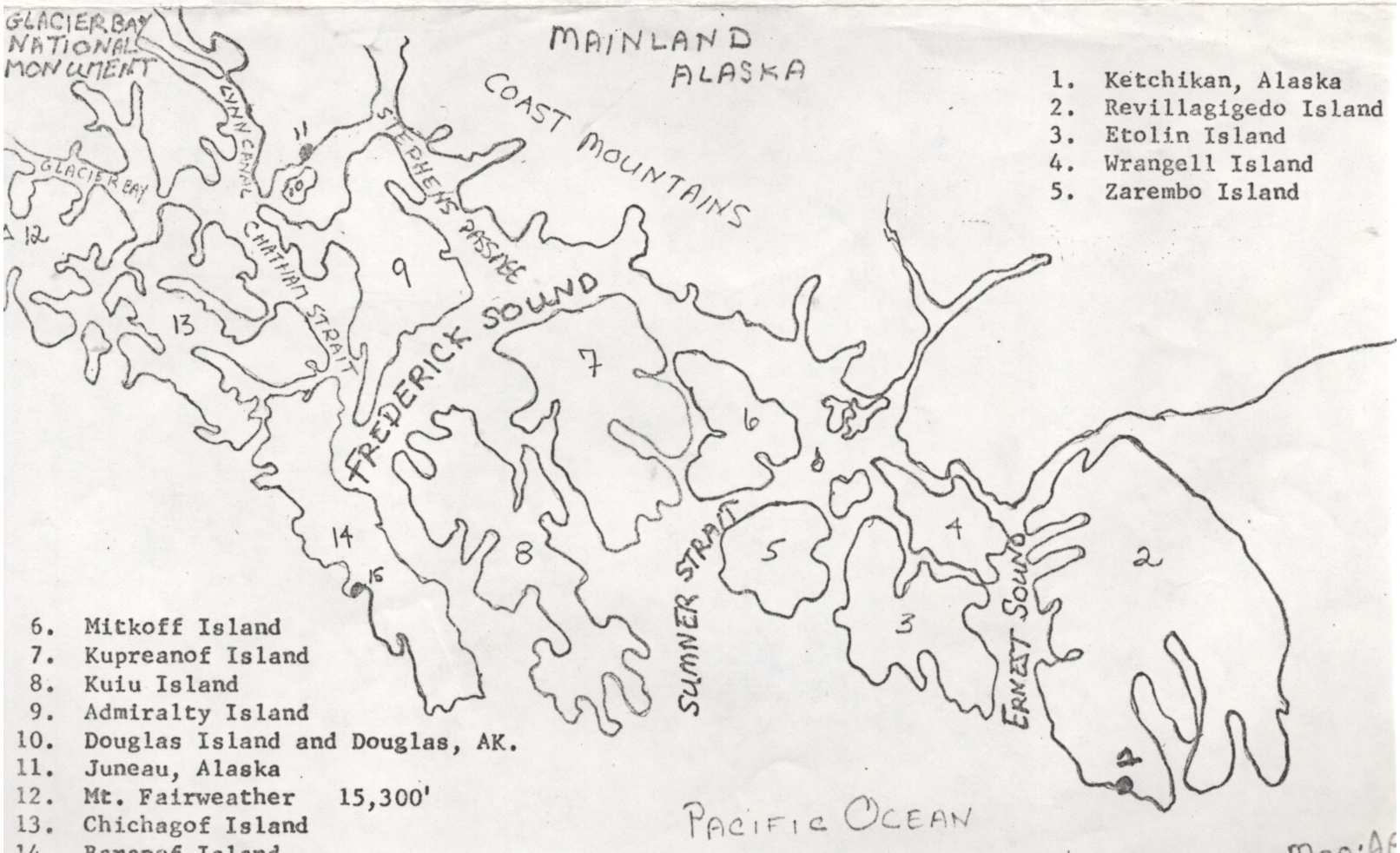

Stephen Nelson
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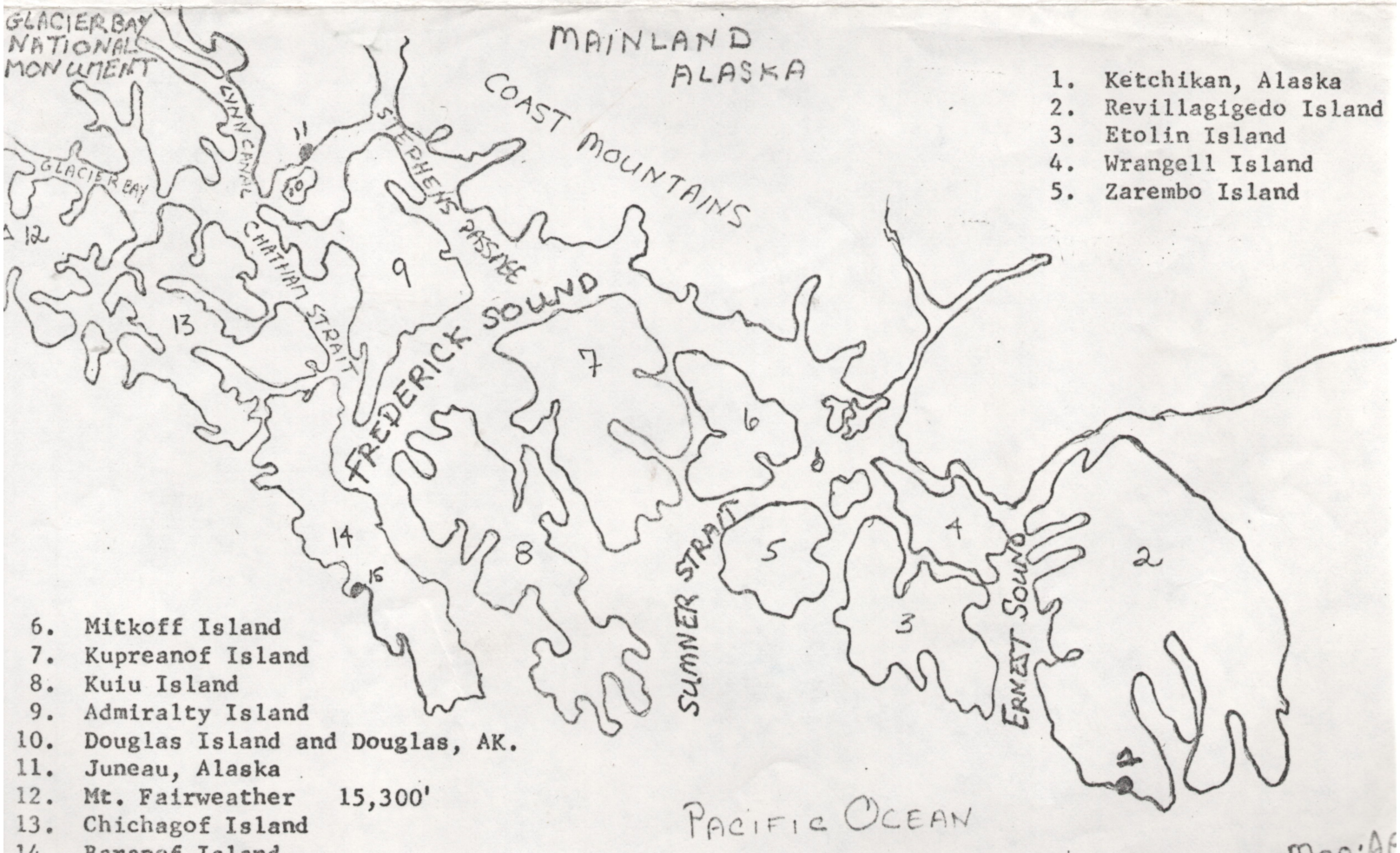
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